



Senate Press Office

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
September 24, 2008

PRESS RELEASE

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Comprehensive Firearms Law Study Committee Considers Public Gatherings

ATLANTA (September 24, 2008) – State Sen. Mitch Seabaugh (R-Sharpsburg), majority whip and chairman of the Senate Comprehensive Firearms Law Study Committee, today convened the second meeting of the study committee at the Capitol to hear the public’s opinion on carrying firearms at public gatherings.

“The public’s input at these meetings is the most essential component of the study committee,” Sen. Seabaugh said. “We’ve moved beyond debating general concepts; the committee needs to hear ideas and concerns on the actual wording of legislation so that we have a straightforward law that everyone understands. We are trying to provide every opportunity for people to voice their opinion on Georgia’s gun laws.”

Many agree that current gun laws are confusing and vary widely. The committee determined that a close examination of the public gatherings clause was needed due to its confusing language. During the meeting, comments were heard from numerous interested parties including educators, parents, healthcare officials and law enforcement officers. Oconee County Sheriff Scott Berry emphasized the need for clear, unambiguous legislation, stating that many law enforcement officials are confused as to exactly when it is illegal for a licensed gun owner to carry a firearm. A panel of clergymen also presented testimony, asking that places of worship retain the right to prohibit guns on their property.

In this same vein, representatives of Georgia's university system suggested that public universities be considered private property in order to regulate guns on their campuses.

The next meeting on October 14 will focus on applications and licensing procedures for a gun carry license. Sen. Seabaugh noted that the following meeting in November will focus on remaining issues, including schools and universities, giving school districts and university systems a large forum for discussion.

The Comprehensive Firearms Law Study Committee was created in the 2008 session to examine Georgia's firearms laws and the way these laws are applied in our state. The Study Committee includes Senators Chip Rogers (R-Woodstock), Don Balfour (R-Snellville), George Hooks (D-Americus) and Preston Smith (R-Rome).

#

Sen. Mitch Seabaugh serves as Senate Majority Whip. He represents the 28th Senate District which includes Coweta and Heard counties and portions of Carroll and Troup counties. He may be reached by phone at 404.656.6446 or by e-mail at mitch.seabaugh@senate.state.gov.

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SENATOR MITCH SEABAUGH

Majority Whip

COMMITTEES:

Appropriations, Sub-Committee Chair
Finance
Regulated Industries and Utilities
Rules, Secretary
Judiciary, Ex Officio
Reapportionment and Redistricting,
Secretary

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS:

Georgia Music Hall of Fame
Georgia Film, Video, & Music Advisory
Commission
Best Value Government Task Force,
Chairman

MEETING AGENDA

September 19, 2008

TO: Members of the Firearms Law Study Committee

**Senator Chip Rogers, 21st
Senator Don Balfour, 9th
Senator George Hooks, 14th
Senator Preston Smith, 52nd**

FROM: Senator Mitch Seabaugh, Chairman, 28th

DATE: Tuesday, September 23, 2008

TIME: 10:00 am

PLACE: 450 State Capitol

AGENDA

10:00 a.m.-10:15	Senator Seabaugh – Introductory Remarks
10:15-10:20	Dee-Jay Beard, Board Member of Georgians for Gun Safety
10:20-10:45	Valerie Hartman Levy, Georgia Director of Million Moms March
10:45-11:00	Lamar Norton, Georgia Municipal Association
11:00-11:30	Mike Menkus, Citizen
11:30-11:45	Marvin Bailey, Central State Hospital Regional Administrator
11:45-12:05 p.m.	Bill Clark, Georgia Trial Lawyers Association
12:05-12:15	Oconee County Sheriff Scott Berry
12:15-1:30	Lunch
1:30-1:45	Louis Dekmar, Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
1:45-2:00	Matthew Podowitz
2:00-2:30	Pastor Bradley Schemling, Rabbi Peter Berg, Reverend Anthony David

2:30-2:50	Dwayne Rose, Educator
2:50-3:10	University System
3:10-3:20	Break
3:20-3:30	Bill Miller, GWCC Authority
3:30-3:45	Ed Stone, GeorgiaCarry.org